



**The Interpretive Link: Abstract Surrealism into Abstract Expressionism,
Works on Paper 1938–1948**

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Front cover.

Mark Rothko

Untitled, early 1940s

Watercolor and ink on paper, 21 × 28½ inches

Collection of Christopher Rothko and Kate Rothko Prizel

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The Interpretive Link: Abstract Surrealism into Abstract Expressionism, Works on Paper 1938–1948

There's a style of painting gaining ground in this country which is neither Abstract nor Surrealist, though it has suggestions of both, while the way the paint is applied—usually in a pretty free-swinging, spattery fashion with only vague hints at subject matter—is suggestive of the methods of Expressionism. I feel that some new name will have to be coined for it, but at the moment I can't think of any (Robert M. Coates, 1944).¹

During World War II, the center of the art world moved from Paris to New York. Concurrently in Europe and America, illusionist Surrealism was supplanted by Abstract Surrealism. A new art evolved that would embrace abstraction, "reassert the picture plane," affirm that "subject is crucial," and find "simple expressions of complex thoughts." Art would be an "adventure into an unknown world" and would have a "spiritual kinship with primitive and archaic art."² As the art world was going through a period of change, the subjects of the artist—the images themselves—became visual metaphors for birth, growth, evolution, and change. Depictions of landscapes, figures, "mindscapes," water, and biological and stellar formations became intermingled, creating complex images with multiple associations.

"The Interpretive Link: Abstract Surrealism into Abstract Expressionism" presents ninety-four drawings by twenty-two artists whose independent vocabularies, styles, attributes, and goals were distinct from orthodox Surrealism and from Abstract Expressionism. This selection of drawings aims to define an Abstract Surrealist idiom leading to the breakthroughs in American painting that culminated in the heroic Abstract Expressionism of the 1950s. The exhibition examines the development of automatism into action and drip painting, the interplay between natural forms and abstraction, and the use of encoded signifiers as subject matter. Incorporating forms derived from the automatic drawing process and images abstracted from the natural world, science, religion, and myth, the Abstract Surrealist artists, during a period of unprecedented conflict, sought to infuse their work with

human emotion. These artists rejected the Surrealists' programmatic lack of esthetic or moral considerations, yet retained their goal of making visible the unseen. Serious in their commitment to pictorial means, the American artists distrusted the Surrealists' playfulness and illusionistic representations. Replacing pure psychic automatism with a more controlled, plastic automatism, the Abstract Surrealists invented an art that addressed both painterly and iconographic concerns. As the drawings in this exhibition confirm, Abstract Expressionism grew out of Abstract Surrealism into an art that no longer required recognizable imagery.

The tendency to explain the beginnings of Abstract Expressionism by the "big bang" or the "clap of thunder" theory portrays New York painting as having originated spontaneously, without a heritage. "When 'Abstract Expressionism' is employed by later critics, it is tacitly assumed that something new (and often uniquely American) is implied; in other words, the emphasis is usually centered on traits without clear precedents or contemporary European analogues."³ This nationalistic interpretation has since been supplanted by more reasoned, formal, and scientific analyses that reveal an evolutionary rather than cataclysmic development.⁴

Subsequent to the 1938–48 period, the different direction taken by each artist is critical to an understanding of his individual oeuvre; our understanding of how the New York School developed, however, is explained in part by the interaction of these artists at that time. The direct contact between the European Surrealists and the American artists was what American art needed to break from the prevailing Regionalism and Social Realism, as well as from an American variant of geometric abstraction. It was the need for this break that Samuel Kootz had in mind when in 1941 he commented:

*Under present circumstances the probability is that the future of painting lies in America. The pitiful fact is, however, that we offer little better than a geographical title to the position of world's headquarters for art. . . . Isn't there a new way to reveal your ideas, American painters? Isn't it time right now to check whether what you're saying is regurgitation, or tired acceptance, or the same smooth railroad track?*⁵

With the outbreak of World War II in 1939, the European Surrealist artists were already prepared for a relocation that would allow them to continue working. When Paris was

overtaken, Surrealist writer André Breton and artists Roberto Matta Echaurren, Yves Tanguy, Gordon Onslow Ford, and others had relocated to a château in Chemillieu (Ain) that Gertrude Stein had rented. Later that year, Onslow Ford, Tanguy, and Matta left for New York. In the ensuing exodus from France through the unoccupied zone, André Masson, Kurt Seligmann, and Man Ray also made their way to New York, where their presence caused a resurgence of interest in revolutionary ideas previously known only through Surrealist publications and exhibitions. America was suddenly host to the avant-garde.

The American artists and the European Abstract Surrealists in New York met and communicated through lectures, exhibitions, publications, and informal gatherings. Peggy Guggenheim's gallery, Art of This Century, was an important arena, mounting one-person shows for the Europeans and for emerging American artists Pollock, Motherwell, Hofmann, Baziotes, and others. Galleries directed by Julien Levy and Pierre Matisse also exhibited important European artists and became meeting places for Americans and Europeans. The Museum of Modern Art, which had championed European modernism from its inception, played a substantial role in this interaction through its exhibitions of Miró, Picasso, and others who remained in Europe but whose presence was felt throughout the forties. "The First Papers of Surrealism" was a seminal coming together of the old and new worlds. A group exhibition, it was organized by the Surrealists in exile in New York, at the Whitelaw Reid Mansion on Madison Avenue in October 1942. Works by the more traditional Surrealists (e.g., Ernst, Masson, Miró, Picasso) were shown with the youngest generation of officially sanctioned Surrealists (Matta and Gorky) and the younger American artists working in an Abstract Surrealist vein (Motherwell and Baziotes). Publications such as *Minotaure*, *VVV*, *The Tiger's Eye*, *The Nation*, *Partisan Review*, *Dyn*, and *Possibilities I* also contributed to a transatlantic exchange.

Sidney Janis, in his book *Abstract and Surrealist Art in America*, addressed the question of Abstract versus Surrealist art: "Though abstraction and surrealism are considered counter-movements in twentieth-century painting, there is in certain painters a fusion of elements from each. American painters particularly have a strong inclination to develop interchanging ideas which may fit into either tradition, though there are purists in both categories who adhere to basic premises and moreover insist that it is impossible to do otherwise. Apparently

the schism between the factions is not as unsurmountable as their members believe.”⁶ An exhibition, “Abstract and Surrealist Art in the U.S.,” based on Janis’ book, was organized by the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art in 1944. The abstraction of this exhibition was not that of the American Abstract Artists group (AAA), which evolved from de Stijl and Mondrian, but a new and painterly abstraction influenced by the last phase of Surrealism. In the exhibition catalogue, American artists listed as Surrealists included Baziotics, Gorky, Motherwell, and Pollock. In subsequent versions of this exhibition, the roster was also to include Gottlieb and Rothko. There should be no doubt that the first generation of Abstract Expressionist painters developed initially in response to and ultimately against the last remnants of Surrealism and the Europeans in America.⁷

The drawings can be divided into broad groups useful in the context of this exhibition, but the same categorization would not be applicable to the works of these artists in the periods preceding or following 1938–48. Overlapping categories represent brief working partnerships, friendships, and stylistic affinities. Several artists in the exhibition worked in concert. Onslow Ford, Motherwell, and Matta, for instance, worked in Mexico and met with Paalen; Pollock, Baziotics, and Kamrowski executed a collaborative painting; Rothko and Gottlieb, with the assistance of Newman, composed a letter to *The New York Times* art critic Edward Alden Jewell that outlined the esthetic concerns of their generation. These collaborations were themselves grounded in a fundamental Surrealist attitude. For example, in the 1920s in Paris, Tanguy invented and Masson collaborated on the Surrealist drawing game, “the exquisite corpse.”

The breakthrough that occurred in 1947–48 created an essentially new art that does not visually reveal its European sources to the extent that the drawings of the period do. And breakthroughs in the large “heroic” paintings precipitated the myth that America had spontaneously invented a new art with no connection to the history of twentieth-century modernism. “The Interpretive Link” focuses on drawings that are neither representational nor abstract. The decision to include only drawings reflects the importance of drawing to these artists, as a means of conveying a multitude of concerns through a diversity of images. Executed quickly and generally smaller, less expensive, and less polished than paintings, drawings encouraged courageous acts that might or might not be successful. In many cases

the drawings of this period are more advanced and experimental than the paintings, allowing the artists to develop a painterly and iconographic vocabulary. The shift in American painting from images and symbols in the early forties to an abstract field orientation in the late forties is documented in these works on paper.

The importance of drawing is affirmed by the large number of drawings extant. In this period, for example, Newman's first works were a group of more than twenty-five crayon drawings; Gorky executed hundreds of drawings, both in preparation for and independent of paintings; Motherwell's first exhibition at Peggy Guggenheim's Art of This Century included forty works on paper and only eight paintings; and Rothko completed hundreds of drawings but only dozens of paintings. By comparing the mature paintings and the drawings of these artists, one realizes the significant stylistic changes generated by the drawing process: Rothko's horizontal division of the picture plane (1943–44), for example, and Newman's vertical divisions (1945); Gorky's incorporation of watercolor techniques into paintings (1942), Matta's linear, multipoint perspective (1941), and Motherwell's resolution of the tension between geometry and automatism (1943).

Traditionally, drawing is defined as a linear depiction, primarily in graphite, but for these artists any medium or material could be applied to paper and any work on paper constituted a drawing. The materials and techniques used included watercolor, gouache, crayon, pastel, colored pencil and, to a lesser extent, graphite, collage, and charcoal. With such a wide variety of media available, the use of graphite to create a descriptive line was only a starting point for most of the artists. Furthermore, "liquid" media—watercolor, oil pastel, and gouache—were preferable to "dry" media. Liquid media were used to apply color at its full intensity and to activate large areas with a broad spectrum of colors without representational description or articulation of volume by chiaroscuro. Ink wash and watercolor fit the artists' need to explore nebulous subject matter and to create an atmospheric primordial brew. Techniques were invented that incorporated conventional materials in unconventional ways, such as the use of saturated watercolor brushes, the use of rags or paper to apply color, the direct application of pigment with the fingers, and the dripping or pouring of liquid pigment. Graphite and silverpoint were not used to achieve a rigid or angular linear quality, as in classical draftsmanship, but for a spontaneous flowing or curvilinear effect. Color and line

became interdependent and inseparable in the drawing process, a revolutionary step for these artists in the formation of their painterly attitude. In this period, drawing temporarily superseded and absorbed painting.

Moreover, the traditional understanding of composition as the placement of forms on a two-dimensional plane was not a primary concern of these artists. In fact, they reversed the composition process, first applying color and abstract forms and following with line for definition, rather than outlining forms and subsequently applying color. It is this important change in attitude that differentiates the Americans from their European colleagues in this exhibition. Reversing the traditional drawing process resulted in a flattening of the picture plane and brought into question the traditional figure/ground relationship. This important flattening process resulted in a specifically American synthesis of modernist pictorial concerns and Surrealist-generated content.

The notion that there is no absolute way of perceiving pictorial space (which already had been clearly addressed by Cubism) required the invention of a multifaceted, multiperspectival space in which images of the unconscious, the sublime, the primordial, and the sexual could be suspended. Traditional Renaissance perspective was replaced by a hierarchical compression of pictorial space, in which the size and placement of any particular image depended on its importance to what the artist was communicating rather than on any concrete visual evidence. Thus, the figure/ground relationship was constantly explored and a tension created between the linear elements that rest on the surface and the vague illusion of a third dimension. The Abstract Surrealist artists conjured a transparent space, interweaving line and color, foreground and background in a metaphorically rich primordial brew. In this regard, Douglas MacAgy pointed out in 1945:

It is possible that pictorial metaphor could allude to a kind of dimensional idiom which would accord more with twentieth century thought than with the three dimensional instrument inherited from the Renaissance. Its expression marks an attitude rather than a style.⁸

Having abandoned traditional realist drawing, the artists were able to focus on developing a content that would be inseparable from the form. Working with images and symbols that

were abstractions both of unconscious, spiritual experience and of ancient and tribal myth, they were able to solve the problem of how to make an abstract art that was neither merely decorative nor purely formal. This new abstraction found inspiration in the sublime beauty of the mind and in natural formations; it expressed itself not by description but by reinterpretation of nature as a symbol of man. As the signs, symbols, and decipherable imagery began to integrate with the formal properties of the drawing, the distinction between figure and ground started to dissolve, fluctuating not optically but poetically in an evocative mythic and symbolic netherworld.

Paul Schimmel

Chief Curator, Newport Harbor Art Museum

1. Robert M. Coates, "Assorted Moderns," *The New Yorker*, December 23, 1944, p. 51.
2. Letter by Gottlieb and Rothko to *The New York Times*, June 7, 1943. Reprinted in Serge Guilbaut, *How New York Stole the Idea of Modern Art: Abstract Expressionism, Freedom, and the Cold War* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1983), pp. 75–76.
3. Stephen C. Foster, *Critics of Abstract Expressionism* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: UMI Research Press, 1980), p. 8.
4. Exhibitions that have focused on the linkage of European and American art rather than their independence include "Dada, Surrealism and Their Heritage," organized by William Rubin, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1968; "Abstract Expressionism: The Formative Years," organized by Robert Hobbs and Gail Levin, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1978; "The Spirit of Surrealism," organized by Edward Henning, Cleveland Museum of Art, 1979; and "Flying Tigers," Bell Gallery, Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island, 1985. Recent one-artist exhibitions have focused on drawings by prominent American Abstract Expressionist masters: Pollock at The Museum of Modern Art, 1969, Newman at the Baltimore Museum of Art, 1979, and Rothko for the American Federation of Arts, 1984.
5. Quoted in Edward Alden Jewell, "The Problem of Seeing," *The New York Times*, August 10, 1941, section 9, p. 7.
6. Sidney Janis, *Abstract and Surrealist Art in America* (New York: Reynal and Hitchcock, 1944), p. 89.
7. Clyfford Still, Kay Sage, and Willem de Kooning were not included in "The Interpretive Link" because drawings that contributed to the central idea of this exhibition were not available. Picasso was not included because his work of the period 1938–48 did not have the effect or influence on these artists that his work from the twenties and thirties had; also, Picasso's images were so powerful that many of these artists had to work through and out of them before developing their own independent style and language. Max Ernst was also to have a discernible effect on these artists; however, like Picasso, his works from the earlier Surrealist period (frottage and its inherent use of accident and chance) were the most influential.
8. "A Symposium: The State of American Art," *Magazine of Art*, 42 (March 1949), p. 94.

Works in the Exhibition

Dimensions are in inches; height precedes width.

William Baziotes (1912–1963)

Untitled, c. 1939

Watercolor and gouache on paper, 12×9

Collection of Ethel Baziotes; courtesy of Blum Helman Gallery, New York

Untitled, c. 1941–42

Watercolor and ink on paper mounted on board,
 $11\frac{7}{8} \times 7\frac{3}{8}$

Collection of Ethel Baziotes; courtesy of Blum Helman Gallery, New York

Untitled, c. 1942–43

Gouache with frottage and ink on paper, $9 \times 11\frac{7}{8}$

Collection of Ethel Baziotes; courtesy of Blum Helman Gallery, New York

Summer Landscape, 1947

Watercolor, ink, and pencil on paper, 14×16

Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Clark

Night Figure, No. 1, n.d.

Watercolor, gouache, ink, and pencil on paper, $18 \times 15\frac{1}{8}$

The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York

Untitled, n.d.

Watercolor on paper, $7\frac{3}{4} \times 9\frac{3}{4}$

Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York; Gift of Dr. and Mrs. Emanuel Klein

Byron Brown (1907–1961)

Head in Violet and Brown, 1940

India ink and wash on paper, 14×11

Meredith Long & Co., Houston

Flying Shapes, 1943

India ink and crayon on paper, $12\frac{1}{2} \times 20\frac{1}{4}$

Meredith Long & Co., Houston

Arshile Gorky (1904–1948)

Study for “*The Liver Is the Cock’s Comb*,” 1943

Ink, pencil, and crayon on paper, $19 \times 25\frac{1}{2}$

Collection of Marcia S. Weisman

Anatomical Blackboard, 1943

Pencil and crayon on paper, $20\frac{1}{4} \times 27\frac{3}{8}$

Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Walter Bareiss

Study for “*The Plough and the Song*,” 1944

Pencil and crayon on paper, $18\frac{1}{2} \times 24\frac{3}{4}$

Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio; Friends of Art Fund

Virginia Landscape, 1944

Pencil and sargent crayon on paper, 19×25

Collection of Stefan T. Edlis

Study for “*Agony*,” 1946

Pencil, wax crayon, and watercolor on paper, $18\frac{1}{2} \times 23\frac{3}{4}$

The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York;

Gift of Rook McCulloh

Study for "Summation," 1946
Pencil and crayon on paper, $18\frac{1}{2} \times 24\frac{1}{2}$
Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Gift of
Mr. and Mrs. Wolfgang S. Schwabacher 50.18

Untitled, c. 1946
Ink, watercolor, pencil, and wax crayon on paper,
 $18\frac{3}{8} \times 24\frac{1}{8}$
The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York;
Gift of Rook McCulloh

Virginia Landscape, c. 1946
Pencil and crayon on paper, $18\frac{1}{2} \times 23\frac{5}{8}$
Xavier Fourcade, Inc., New York

Study for "Agony I," 1946–47
Pencil, crayon, and wash on paper, $21\frac{3}{4} \times 29\frac{1}{2}$
Sarah Campbell Blaffer Foundation, Houston

Adolph Gottlieb (1903–1974)

The Centers of Lateral Resistance, 1945
Gouache on paper, 32×24
The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York

Untitled, 1946
Gouache on paper, 20×26
Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse, New York; Gift of
André Emmerich

Voyager's Return, 1946
Gouache and watercolor on paper, $25\frac{1}{2} \times 19\frac{5}{8}$
Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Gift of
Mr. and Mrs. Samuel M. Kootz 51.38

Untitled, c. 1946
Gouache and crayon on paper, $19\frac{3}{8} \times 24\frac{7}{8}$
Collection of Phil and Norma Fine

Untitled, c. 1947–48
Gouache and sgraffito on paper, 24×18
Private collection

John D. Graham (1881–1961)

Untitled, 1942
Gouache on paper, 18×24
André Emmerich Gallery, New York

Untitled, 1943
Gouache on paper, 24×19
Allan Stone Gallery, New York

Hans Hofmann (1880–1966)

Midnight Glow, 1945
Gouache on paper, $28\frac{3}{4} \times 22\frac{3}{4}$
Private collection

Phantasie in Red, 1945
Watercolor on paper, 29×23
The Ball Stalker Collection, Atlanta

Untitled, 1945
Gouache and ink on paper, $17\frac{1}{2} \times 22\frac{1}{2}$
André Emmerich Gallery, New York

Untitled, c. 1946
Gouache on paper, $28\frac{3}{4} \times 23\frac{1}{8}$
Collection of Cynthia and Micha Ziprkowski

Untitled, 1948
India ink on paper, $22\frac{3}{4} \times 30$
André Emmerich Gallery, New York

Jerome Kamrowski (b. 1914)

Emotional Seasons, 1943
Gouache and collage on paper on wood; drawings on
both sides of board, $21\frac{1}{2} \times 21\frac{1}{8}$
Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Purchase,
with funds from Charles Simon 78.69

Forest Forms, 1943

Gouache on paper, 22 × 30

Collection of Mary Jane Kamrowski

Small Scene on a Pagan Bluff, 1943

Gouache on paper, 22 × 30

Jane Voorhees Zimmerli Art Museum, Rutgers—The State University, New Brunswick, New Jersey; Gift of the artist

Wifredo Lam (1902–1982)

L'Homme à la Vague, 1942

Gouache on paper, 41½ × 34

Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York

Les Yeux de la Grille, 1942

Gouache on paper, 41½ × 33

Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York

André Masson (b. 1896)

Vois l'Antre des Metamorphoses, 1938

Ink on paper, 19½ × 25½

Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York; Membership Purchase Fund

Couple Amoureux, 1943

Mixed media on board, 30 × 22

Private collection

Study for *Antille*, 1943

Crayon and gouache on paper, 19 × 12½

Marisa del Re Gallery, Inc., New York

Regardant l'Aquarium, 1944

Watercolor, ink, and pastel on paper, 19¾ × 23½

Collection of Anne and Jean-Claude Lahumière

Matta (Roberto Matta Echaurren) (b. 1911)

Endless Nude, 1938

Crayon and pencil on paper, 12¾ × 19½

The Museum of Modern Art, New York, Katherine S. Dreier Bequest

Untitled, c. 1938

Crayon and pencil on paper, 12¼ × 19

Maxwell Davidson Gallery, courtesy of Arnold Herstand & Co., New York

Preliminary study for "Prescience," 1939

Pencil and colored pencil on paper, 11 × 14½

Collection of Luisa Laureati

Psychological Architecture, 1940–41

Crayon, pencil, and colored pencil on paper, 16¾ × 21

Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Clark

Untitled, 1942

Crayon and pencil on paper, 23 × 29

Private collection

Woman Impaled and Five Other Scenes, 1943

Pencil and crayon on paper, 23 × 29

Private collection

Project for "The Onyx of Electra," 1944

Collage and drawing on paper,

15½ × 20

Collection of Luisa Laureati

Crucifixion, c. 1946

Pencil and crayon on paper, 17 × 21½

Private collection

Joan Miró (1893–1983)

Acrobatic Dancers, 1940

Gouache and oil wash on paper, $18\frac{1}{2} \times 15$

Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, Connecticut;

The Philip L. Goodwin Collection

Untitled, 1941

Watercolor and ink on paper, $19\frac{1}{2} \times 25\frac{1}{2}$

Marisa del Re Gallery, Inc., New York

Personnage et Oiseau dans la Nuit, 1942

Pencil on paper, $18 \times 24\frac{1}{2}$

Galerie Maeght Lelong, New York

Personnages, Oiseau, Étoile, 1942

Gouache on paper, $43 \times 30\frac{1}{2}$

Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York

Robert Motherwell (b. 1915)

For Pajarito, 1941

Oil wash and ink on paperboard, 8×10

Portland Museum of Art, Maine; Purchase with
matching grants from the National Endowment for the
Arts and Casco Bank and Trust Co.

The Mexican Sketchbook, 1941

Ink on paper, eleven pages, $9 \times 11\frac{1}{2}$

Collection of the artist

Figure with Blots, 1943

Oil and collage on paper, $45\frac{1}{2} \times 38$

Collection of Mr. and Mrs. David Mirvish

Three Figures Shot, 1944

Colored ink on paper, $11\frac{3}{8} \times 14\frac{1}{2}$

Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Purchase,
with funds from the Burroughs Wellcome Purchase Fund
and the National Endowment for the Arts 81.31

Three Important Personnages, 1944

Ink on paper, 11×14

Collection of Richard E. and Jane M. Lang

Collage #2, 1945

Oil and collage on board, $21\frac{7}{8} \times 14\frac{7}{8}$

Collection of the artist

Barnett Newman (1905–1970)

The Slaying of Osiris, 1944

Oil and oil crayon on paper, $19\frac{7}{8} \times 14\frac{3}{4}$

Collection of Annalee Newman

Untitled, 1944

Wax crayon and oil crayon on paper, 15×20

Collection of Annalee Newman

The Song of Orpheus, 1944–45

Oil, oil crayon, and wax crayon on paper, 19×14

Collection of Annalee Newman

Gea, 1945

Oil and oil crayon on cardboard, $27\frac{3}{4} \times 21\frac{7}{8}$

Collection of Annalee Newman

Untitled, 1945

Oil, oil crayon, and pastel on paper, $19\frac{3}{8} \times 25\frac{1}{2}$

Collection of Annalee Newman

Untitled, 1945

Watercolor and tempera on paper, $11\frac{1}{2} \times 16\frac{1}{4}$

Collection of Annalee Newman

Untitled, 1945

Watercolor on paper, $11\frac{1}{2} \times 16\frac{1}{4}$

Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles

Gordon Onslow Ford (b. 1912)

Mountain Auras, 1939

Gouache on paper, $19\frac{1}{2} \times 25\frac{1}{4}$

Collection of the artist

Amorous Landscape, 1940

Gouache and watercolor on paper, $19\frac{1}{2} \times 13\frac{5}{8}$

Collection of the artist; courtesy of Arnold Herstand & Co., New York

Wolfgang Paalen (1907–1959)

Mexico, 1941

Pencil on paper, 32×24

Collection of Gordon Onslow Ford

Jackson Pollock (1912–1956)

Animal Figures, c. 1939–42

Ink on paper, $13 \times 10\frac{3}{8}$

Fort Worth Art Museum, Texas; Purchase made possible by a grant from the Anne Burnett and Charles Tandy Foundation

Untitled, c. 1939–42

Crayon and pencil on paper, 14×11

Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, Purchase, with funds from the Julia B. Engel Purchase Fund and the Drawing Committee 85.18

Untitled, 1943

Ink and watercolor on paper, $26 \times 20\frac{1}{2}$

Montana Historical Society, Helena;
Poindexter Collection

Untitled, c. 1943

Ink and gouache on paper, $12\frac{1}{2} \times 13$

Collection of Abby and B. H. Friedman

Untitled, c. 1943

Collage, ink, crayon, and colored pencil on paper,
 $15\frac{1}{2} \times 13\frac{5}{8}$

Collection of Marcia S. Weisman

Untitled, c. 1943

Ink and pencil on paper, $5\frac{5}{8} \times 17\frac{7}{8}$

Anonymous extended loan to The Museum of Modern Art, New York

Untitled, c. 1946

Ink on paper, $5 \times 11\frac{1}{2}$

Betty Parsons Foundation, New York

Untitled, 1947

Ink and crayon on paper, $17\frac{3}{4} \times 23\frac{1}{4}$

Collection of Duncan MacGuigan

Richard Pousette-Dart (b. 1916)

Hesperides, 1944–45

Mixed media on gesso board, 20×24
Marisa del Re Gallery, Inc., New York

Untitled, 1945

Mixed media and gouache on parchment, 22×18
Private collection

Mark Rothko (1903–1970)

Untitled, early 1940s

Watercolor and ink on paper, $15 \times 21\frac{1}{2}$

Collection of Christopher Rothko and Kate Rothko Prizel

Untitled, early 1940s

Watercolor and ink on paper, 21×30

Collection of Christopher Rothko and Kate Rothko Prizel

Untitled, early 1940s

Watercolor and ink on paper, $21 \times 28\frac{1}{4}$

Collection of Christopher Rothko and Kate Rothko Prizel

Untitled, early 1940s
Watercolor on paper, 32 × 22
Collection of Christopher Rothko and Kate Rothko Prizel

Untitled, 1944
Watercolor and ink on paper, 21 × 30
Collection of Christopher Rothko and Kate Rothko Prizel

Untitled, 1944
Watercolor on paper, 26 × 19 $\frac{3}{4}$
Collection of Douglas and Carol Cohen

Baptismal Scene, 1945
Watercolor on paper, 19 $\frac{7}{8}$ × 14
Whitney Museum of American Art, New York;
Purchase 46.12

Untitled, mid-1940s
Watercolor on paper, 40 $\frac{1}{2}$ × 27
Collection of Christopher Rothko and Kate Rothko Prizel

Tentacles of Memory, c. 1945–46
Watercolor and ink on paper, 21 $\frac{3}{4}$ × 30
San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Albert M. Bender
Collection, Allen M. Bender Bequest Fund purchase

Entombment I, 1946
Gouache on paper, 20 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 25 $\frac{3}{4}$
Whitney Museum of American Art, New York;
Purchase 47.10

Entombment II, 1946
Watercolor on paper, 30 × 38
Private collection

David Smith (1906–1965)

Untitled, 1946–47
Oil on paper on panel, 30 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 22 $\frac{3}{4}$
Collection of Candida and Rebecca Smith; courtesy of
M. Knoedler & Co., Inc., New York

Theodore Stamos (b. 1922)

Ancestral Worship, 1947
Gouache, ink, and pastel on paper, 17 $\frac{1}{2}$ × 23 $\frac{3}{8}$
Whitney Museum of American Art, New York;
Purchase 48.9

Untitled, 1947
Ink and tempera on paper, 12 $\frac{1}{4}$ × 18 $\frac{1}{2}$
Turske & Turske, Zurich

Yves Tanguy (1900–1955)

Untitled, 1943
Gouache on paper, 14 × 11
Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Clark

Taille de Guêpe, 1945
Gouache on paper, 22 × 11
Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York

Untitled, 1945
Gouache on paper, 17 $\frac{1}{2}$ × 11 $\frac{7}{8}$
The Museum of Modern Art, New York; Kay Sage
Tanguy Bequest

Mark Tobey (1890–1976)

Red Man—White Man—Black Man, 1945
Oil and gouache on cardboard, 25 × 28
Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York; Room of
Contemporary Art Fund

Whitney Museum of American Art at Equitable Center

787 Seventh Avenue between 51st and 52nd Streets
New York, New York 10019
(212) 554-1000

Hours

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday 11:00–6:00
Thursday 11:00–7:30
Saturday 12:00–5:00
Free admission

Gallery Talks

12:30 Monday, Wednesday, Friday
Tours by appointment

Staff

Kathleen Monaghan, Branch Director
Paula Breckenridge, Manager
Allison Reid Shutz, Gallery Assistant
Erika M. Wolf, Gallery Assistant

The Museum and its programs are supported by The Equitable.

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October 24, 1986–January 21, 1987